Hauling Butte Falls timber to Medco's mill in the early 1940s

ELLA FERN PINGLE (1914-2010)

Ella and her family settled in Prospect at the Mil Mar Ranch in 1947 and moved to Butte Falls when they bought the Butte Falls General Store in 1953. Ella worked long hours at the store but gave almost every other moment of daylight to the community. She was a Butte Falls Lady Lions, worked with the Lions Sight and Hearing Center in Medford, served on the school budget committee, the town planning commission, helped organize Fourth of July parades and worked on many community events. Ella also dyed thousands of eggs for the annual Bruce Pingle Memorial Easter Egg Hunt, named in honor of her husband. Block #2, Lot #32

WILLIAM ISAAC ODEN, SR. (1901-1977)

Bill was the engineer on the 4-Spot Willamette Iron & Steel Works train that pulled the logs out of Butte Falls for many years. His son, Billy (William Loren Oden, Jr.) worked on the train as well. Karen Nunes Davis, Butte Falls Cemetery sexton, is related to the Oden family through her mother, Elizabeth Oden Nunes, daughter of William Isaac Oden, Sr. Many of the Oden family rest in the Butte Falls Cemetery, the patriarch, William Isaac Oden, Sr. at Block #1, Lot #154 and others in Block #3.

CARRIE HILL (1872-1948)

Carrie Koenig was often in the California news in her late teens and early 20s but it seems the news didn't follow her to Butte Falls, Oregon. Born in Ohio in 1872 and later relocated to California with her family, Carrie married Friedrich Koenig in an 1887 Oakland, California ceremony. She would have been 15 years old at the time of her marriage. Twin boys were born in 1889 but in 1891 Carrie was granted a divorce on grounds of abuse and neglect. The papers kept track of Carrie's doings, reporting that she and Friedrich were married again for a second time in April 1893. That October, the Oakland Tribune revealed that according to Major Frank Robinson (formerly of the Salvation Army), the army paid off a $100 debt owed to Friedrich by coercing Carrie into remarrying him. In 1897, it was Friedrich who filed for divorce. Carrie Hill Koenig then married Frances Deming Hill in a 1902 Napa, California ceremony. The 1910 U.S. Census shows Carrie and Frances in Big Butte, Oregon where they lived together for nearly 40 years. Carrie's son Edwin Mooney Koenig died in 1928, multiple sclerosis is noted on his death certificate, and he rests in the Butte Falls Cemetery near his mother. Carrie (Hill) Hill's obituary does not acknowledge her marriages to Friedrich Koenig. Block #1, Lot #130

ELGA W. ABBOTT (1902-2000)

Elga Warren Abbott worked in the woods his whole life, much of the time for Medco. A great storyteller, Elga Abbott's oral histories informed Jeff LaLande's book, *Medford Corporation: A History of an Oregon Logging and Lumber Company* and historian, Kay Atwood's writing. Atwood's interviews with Elga Abbott are in her archives in Hannon Library's Special Collections at Southern Oregon University. Block #1, Lot #144

Bill Oden was the engineer on the 4-Spot

Images courtesy of the Town of Butte Falls and members of the community. This guide produced with the support of Southern Oregon University thanks to funding from the Oregon Heritage Commission.

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Butte Falls CEMETERY

The Butte Falls Cemetery was established in 1868 and many of those who are buried here still have relatives who live in Southern Oregon. Now owned by the Town of Butte Falls, Karen Davis has served as sexton for more than 38 years. She was born and raised in Butte Falls, and has documented the lives of those who rest in the Butte Falls Cemetery in her 2010 book, *Under the Giants: Those Buried in the Butte Falls Cemetery*. This walking guide borrows much from Karen's work as in those pages, she has written a brief biography for each person, noting birth and death dates, relationships and the locations of memorials and markers.

In Karen's own words, "I have memories of many who are found buried through out the Butte Falls Cemetery. I have been blessed over the years by helping families as they mourn their loss and celebrate the lives of their loved ones. Come let me take you on a journey where although the faces may have faded, their names will surely help you to remember."

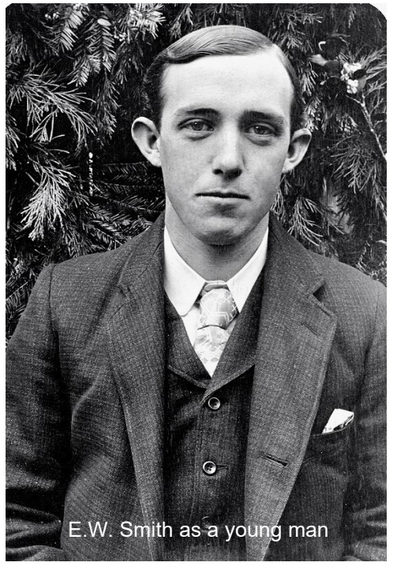
The Town of Butte Falls and the Butte Falls Cemetery are located deep in the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest. The forests are magnificent, some areas showing the scars of the 2020 Obenchain Fire that devastated the landscape but spared both the town and cemetery. That year, the Town of Butte Falls purchased nearly 400 acres of forest and determined to manage the forest for sustainable harvest, recreation, education and wildfire mitigation. The Butte Falls Community Forest serves as a buffer to protect the town and its historic cemetery and inspires all who enjoy its beauty.

The Butte Falls Cemetery is located about two miles west of town, on North Obenchain Road, off of Butte Falls Highway. Driving down the wooded road, you might feel you've missed the cemetery, but you haven't. It is well marked and there's a gravel parking lot across from the entrance.

Butte Falls Cemetery
North Obenchain Road
Butte Falls, Oregon

CHARLES ARNOLD (1830-1868)

James Charles Arnold's is the oldest grave in the Butte Falls Cemetery, his marker noting merely "Before 1868." Known by the names Charley, James George Arnold, Ezra Arnold and James Ezra Arnold, he was shot and killed by James Hards on May 27, 1868 in an argument about Charley's daughter who was Hards' wife, Helen, about a dog or about a Big Butte timber claim. It was Hards who'd registered a cash sale for 40 acres in 1866. After the murder, Hards left the county and Helen divorced her husband on the grounds of desertion. Helen married Charles Thurman in 1872, who died in 1891 leaving behind a homestead claim of 160 acres along Little Applegate Road. Hards returned to Jackson County and was captured, tried, convicted, sentenced to 15 years on May 12, 1893 and then pardoned by Governor Pennoyer on June 26, 1894. Helen Thurman and James Hards married in her Applegate home on October 30, 1894, the Reverend Robert Ennis officiating. Helen would marry again, to James H. Johnson. Hards is not noted in Helen's obituary. Today, descendants of James Charles Arnold and Charles Lester Thurman can be found throughout Southern Oregon. Block #1, Lot #32



E.W. Smith as a young man

Bill Edmondson's carvings can be found in unexpected places, this one outside the Butte Falls Fire Department

WILLIAM BERNARD EDMONDSON (1911-1994)

Bill Edmondson isn't the earliest of the Edmondson family to rest in the Butte Falls Cemetery, but he may be one of the best know. Edmondson worked in the woods as a faller for Medco. His wood carvings can be found throughout the Town of Butte Falls and in the Smithsonian Institution, lovely panels that detail scenes of everyday life. Much of his work can be found in the Ernest W. Smith House and Bill Edmondson Memorial Museum. Block #1, Lot #158

ERNEST WEBSTER SMITH (1888-1982)

E.W. Smith must have been a remarkable man: a teacher, surveyor, chiropractor, inventor, fire lookout, poet, photographer and town treasurer. He mapped much of the Rogue National Forest while working for Medco. and photographed all he saw. E.W. developed a fire detection and signaling device first used on Mt. Pitt that could be seen 20 miles away in Butte Falls. Today, many of E.W. Smith's photographs and equipment are on view in his home at 432 East Pine Street, Butte Falls, now a museum. E.W. Smith's maternal grandfather was R.L. Parker, who founded one of the earliest saw mills in the area, on Obenchain Road. Many Smith family relations rest nearby in the Butte Falls Cemetery including his father, Edgar E. Smith who was Butte Falls' first mayor in 1911. Block #1, Lot #141

RUTH EDITH (SMITH) CAPELLO (1922-1992)

Ruth Capello was a lady about town volunteering for blood drives, PTA events and potlucks until lightening struck the family home on June 20, 1963. The battery on the 1900s era fire truck died just out of the gate and Ruth's house burned to the ground. That's when Ruth, her husband Charles "Red" and son John set out to organize a trained volunteer and rescue crew. Red was the first official Butte Falls Fire Chief, and after his death in 1971, the city talked Ruth into the job. Ruth Capello was the first known city-appointed female fire chief in the United States. Her son John took the position on Ruth's retirement in 1982. Block #2, Lot #7

JOHN PERRY HUGHES (1853-1929)

J.P. Hughes (sometimes spelled Hughs) was a prosperous Butte Falls merchant by 1910 buying out Butte Falls shopkeeper and postmaster G.T. Richards in 1907. The store carried produce, dairy, hardware, dry goods and livery supplies among other items. By 1910, Butte Falls boasted a railroad depot, hotel, two general stores, a bank and other businesses. Hughes is said to have built much of Butte Falls and his store at 407 Broad stands today as the Butte Falls Historic Tavern. Block #1, Lot #106

J.P. and Clara Hughes with daughter Edith and Grannie Hughes

WILLIAM RAYMOND PARKER (1894-1986)

Ray Parker was among the party that registered the earliest seasonal ascent of Mt. Pitt on June 15, 1912. The party included Frank Duncan of Klamath Falls and Charles Patton, E.W. Smith and Earle Brainerd, all of Butte Falls. The *Mail Tribune* reported that the last several miles were brutal, over deep snow and ice as hard as a glacier. On attaining their goal, the men registered their names and date in the record book kept at the peak. Parker's father, William Wontan and grandfather, Raymond Lemmon Parker held large tracts of forest land, and photos of the homestead show that the meadow is today as beautiful as it was when the homestead was proved in 1907. Block #1, Lot #139

JEFF DAVIS (dates unknown)

Karen Davis, in her book *Under the Giants: Those Buried in Butte Falls Cemetery*, relates local stories that Jeff Davis and his brother were Native American children brought to Butte Falls by Benjamin Franklin Clark Edmondson, Jr. and adopted by Ben and Kizzie. It is said that Jeff played the violin beautifully. The family heritage of the two boys is unknown and Census records do not record their presence in the Edmondson household. Block #1, Lot #33

LLOYD ELSWORTH TUNGATE 1923-2002

Bud Tungate was a timber faller for 33 years, retiring from Medco in 1985. He is one of the many veterans who rest in the cemetery, having served in the Marines as a Master Sargent in the South Pacific during WWII. Bud was a charter member and president of the Butte Falls Lions Club and his wife, June Kincaid Tungate was town recorder for a time. There are many Tungate descendants living today in Southern Oregon. Block #2, Lot #22

Back row, left to right: Ella Parker, Dolly (Laura) Parker, unknown, Ernest W. Smith, Edgar Smith (Teacher), Benny Parker. Front row, left to right: Ray, Grace and Myrtle Parker. The Old Parker School circa 1905